

Because it was a mystery why it would be and it remained a mystery for 1000 years till the time of Christ and it remained a mystery ever since up until the 1928. In 1928 there was excavated in N. Mesopotamia in a region near to where Laban lived, the family records of a number of families that lived up in that area, and in those records - it's not a history that everybody wrote about the family, it's their deeds to their property, their wills, all that sort of thing. In those we learn a great deal about the customs of that time, and we find from them at that time in that area if a person wanted to have his property not go to his son or if he had no sons, and he wanted it to go to a son-in-law he would give that son-in-law his household gods to take charge of, so that after a man's death if a son-in-law came to the courts, See these house hold gods, my father-in-law gave them to me to take care of, that shows he was leaving all his property to me.

Well, Laban had already lost a great part of his property through Jacob earning it through -- from him, now he wanted his son to get what was left, and that was why Rachel stole them too we can be sure of that. But we're glad that Jacob did not know anything about it. Jacob was not a party to it, and Jacob was indignant. If you want to read something that is ironical, read this last part of ch. 31 where Jacob lashed out at Laban for accusing him for being so low-down as to steal those gods, and he told Laban what he thought of him. Here it was proven that it was all a lie. Well, it is very interesting to see, but I think Laban still had his doubts about it because we read they put up a pillar there and when they put it up Laban said, We're going to call this a Witness between me and thee this day. "The Lord watch between me and thee when we are absent one from another that you don't cross over this line and come over here to steal this property from my son, if you have got those household gods hidden away somewhere." So our Mispah benediction becomes much more meaningful to us when we see why Laban and Jacob gave it.

But you read on a short distance further and you find that some months later when they got to Bethel that Jacob said, Take all the ~~xx~~ false gods that any of you have and bury them here. And he got rid of all the false gods that anybody had in his whole outfit there and I'm sure that that meant that was the end of those household gods. He never used them in that ~~xxx~~ mean way that Rachel had in mind when she stole them.

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Now this story could have been invented in the time of the later Israelite kingdom as Wellhausen told us is just impossible. If it was they certainly would have explained it, but in the days when it happened they just put it down and don't bother to explain it because everybody knows. That's the great difficulty in history. You come to write a history of a period, and you take the records and the records people make, they don't explain the common things of life. Everybody knows them, and then when conditions change they ~~eg~~ forget about them and they are gone. So Anderson puts his little dotted line there, and he does not realize that that little dotted line is a little bit of dynamite underneath your whole Graf-Wellhausen theory.